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DAIKATANA

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IT IS MIDDAY AND THE SUN CANNOT PENETRATE THE THICK SMOG THAT STRANGLES THE CITY.
I RODE SINCE EARLY MORNING AND COULD NOT TELL THE TIME OF DAY WITHOUT CONSULTING MY TIME-PIECE. WE LIVE IN AN AGE WHEN THE MINUTE HAND ON A CLOCK IS LIKE AN EXCLAMATION MARK.
BUT EVEN A STOPPED CLOCK TELLS THE RIGHT TIME TWICE A DAY.
ALWAYS THE ROADS I RIDE TAKE ME BACK TO THIS PLACE, WHERE MY FAITHFUL WIFE, TIME, BECAME AN UNFAITHFUL HARLOT, DESTROYING MY HAPPY HOME.
THE DARK SATANIC MILLS OF MISHIMA INDUSTRIES VOMITED THEIR FILTH INTO THE HEAVENS AND STOLE AWAY THE SUN.
APOCALYPTIC WYRMWOOD WAS A BLACK FOREST THAT GREW WITHIN AN INDUSTRIALIST'S HEART. BACK THEN WE WERE JUST TOO BLIND TO SEE, TOO NAIVE, TOO TRUSTING.
SUCH TIMES. WHO WOULD BELIEVE NOW WE WERE EVER SO YOUNG...

"ENJOY YOURSELF WHILE YOU MAY, MY SON. IT IS ALWAYS LATER THAN YOU THINK."
"TIME WILL STEAL THE STRAW FROM YOUR HAIR AND THE BLUE SKY FROM YOUR EYES."
INSHIRO MIYAMOTO, OFFICIAL WEAPONS FORGER TO THE SHOGUNATE MISHIMA, WATCHES HIS SON USAGI AT PLAY. THE PASTEL SHADES OF YOUTH COLOR HIS FATHER'S EYES AND TINGE THEM WITH AN UNFAMILIAR MELANCHOLY.
TIME BENDS LIKE A RIVER ABOUT US ALL, SWEEPING US IN ITS CURRENTS TO DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN.
ALL OUR LIVES WE SKIM ALONG ITS SURFACE, ON A ONE WAY JOURNEY DOWN AN ENDLESS RIVER OF CHANGE.
WOULD THAT WE COULD FIND A WAY TO BREAK THE SURFACE AND NAVIGATE ITS TREACHEROUS DEPTHS AND UNDERTOWS TO SAIL BACK UP THE RIVER OF TIME.
PAPA, A FISH, I CAUGHT A FISH! A FISH FOR YOU, PAPA!
AGAINST ALL THE ODDS YOU HAVE REACHED BENEATH THE SURFACE AND PULLED A TREASURE FROM THE DEPTHS, MY SON.
NO, PAPA. I HAVE JUST CAUGHT A FISH FOR OUR SUPPER.
AND THE RIVER OF TIME FLOWS ON...

SOMEDAY SOON, USAGI, MY SON, YOU WILL TAKE MY PLACE AS WEAPONS FORGER TO THE HONORABLE SHOGUNATE. I SEE IN YOU ALREADY THE SEEDS OF GREATNESS, YOU MAY WELL BE THE BEST YET.
BUT OUR TIME IS PASSING, I FEAR. THE AGE OF THE EXPLODING BLACK POWDER SHALL MAKE OUR SKILLS REDUNDANT.
A FISTFUL OF THE BLACK POWDER CAN TEAR DOWN A CASTLE WALL, EVEN SHIFT A MOUNTAINTOP. WHAT PLACE FOR OUR MEAGER CRAFTS IN SUCH A WORLD.
YOU MAY WELL BE THE BEST BUT YOU WILL ALSO BE THE LAST OF THE MIYAMOTO WEAPONS FORGERS. THIS I PREDICT.
I AM TO BE THE LAST, THEN THE LEGACY I SHALL LEAVE WILL BE ONE SUCH AS THE WORLD HAS NEVER SEEN. I WILL FIND A WAY TO CREATE THE MOST POWERFUL SWORD IN ETERNITY.
A WEAPON OF SUCH PERFECTION, SUCH GLITTERING SIMPLICITY AND FUNCTIONAL ELEGANCE, IT WILL LAST FOREVER. THROUGH MY SWORD THE MIYAMOTO NAME SHALL BE REMEMBERED THROUGH ALL AGES OF MAN.
I HAVE NAMED MY SWORD BUT I WILL NOT SPEAK THAT NAME UNTIL I HOLD IN MY HANDS THE FINEST SWORD CREATED, FORGED ON THE ANVIL OF GOD THE CREATOR. THIS I PREDICT.
WITH ANOTHER SURGE THE RIVER OF TIME SWEEPS UP ALL IN ITS PATH AND MOVES ONWARD...

THE YEARS PASS LIKE GRAINS OF SAND SCATTERED BY THE BEATING OF AN ANGEL'S WINGS USAGI MIYAMOTO TRAVELED THE WORLD, AS FEW BEFORE...NOR FEW SINCE HAVE DONE.
EMBRACING THE MANY MARVELS AND TERRORS OF THE WORLD, IN HIS QUEST TO CREATE THE PERFECT WEAPON. EXPERIENCE SHAPES THE YOUNG MAN AND HONES HIS SWORD MAKING SKILLS TO AN UNEARTHLY PRECISION.
BARECHESTED AND SWEATING HE LEARNS THE VIKING SKILLS OF THE NORSE FORGER, WHERE STEEL BECOMES A BRIDGE FROM THIS WORLD TO VALHALLA.
BENEATH BURGUNDY HAITIAN SKIES HE WALKS UPON BURNING COALS TO LEARN ALL HE CAN FROM THE DARK SKINNED VOODOO SHAMENS WHOSE BELIEFS ARE AS OLD AS MAN HIMSELF.
FROM CELTIC DRUIDS HE LEARNS OF THE WARRIORS' WARP SPASMS AND THE FAERIE WAYS OF TIR NA NOG, LAND OF THE FOREVER YOUNG WHERE THE RIVER OF TIME MAY BE PARTED OR SWAM UP WITH THE USE OF AN ARCANE AND MYSTICAL SWORD.

IN TIME THE DREAMS OF USAGI MIYAMOTO BECAME A RAZOR EDGED REALITY...
I WISH THAT YOU HAD LIVED, MY FATHER, TO SEE THIS DAY. INVESTED IN THIS SWORD ARE ALL THE GENERATIONS OF THE MIYAMOTO CLAN. FROM AGE TO AGE THEY PASSED THEIR SKILLS ON, TO BRING US TO THIS MOMENT WITH HONOR AND RESPECT, MY BLESSED ANCESTORS, I DEDICATE TO YOU...
..THE DAIKATANA!
BUT ALL WAS NOT WELL AND SOON THE DREAM BECAME A WAKING NIGHTMARE. IN HONORABLE TIMES THE DAIKATANA WOULD HAVE BEEN A REVERED ICON. A TESTAMENT TO THE SPIRIT OF MAN AND HIS CONQUEST OVER CHAOS.
YET THE WORLD WAS NOW ENTERING A TIME WHEN HONOR WAS A COMMODITY LESS VALUED THAN POWER. WHERE THE POWER OF THE SHOGUNATE WAS ABSOLUTE AND THAT POWER CORRUPTED ABSOLUTELY.
THE POWER OF THE DAIKATANA ALLOWED USAGI A GLIMPSE INTO THE KILLING FIELDS OF THE FUTURE AND HIS HEART GREW COLD AND HEAVY AT WHAT HE SAW. HE KNEW HE COULD NEVER ALLOW HIS BELOVED DAIKATANA TO BECOME THE FOUNDATION STONE FOR SUCH A FUTURE.
FORGIVE ME, MY ANCESTORS. I SEE NOW THAT SUCH A PERFECT CREATION AS THIS SWORD HAS NO PLACE IN THIS WORLD. IN MY ARROGANCE I HAVE CREATED A TOOL THAT AVARICE, GREED AND CRUELTY WOULD PAINT THE WORLD RED WITH.
I SEE NO RECOURSE BUT TO USE IT TO SEND ME TO YOUR SIDE AND TO TAKE THIS WEAPON TO A PLACE WHERE NO MAN CAN EVER TOUCH IT.
HIS SHAME IS INTOLERABLE. HE SEES ONLY ONE WAY TO REDEEM THE HONOR OF HIS FAMILY'S NAME.

HE FORGETS HIS PLACE. ALL THAT HE CREATES, I OWN. MY SPIES AMONGST THE PEASANTS TELL OF AN UPRISING THAT WILL OVERTHROW MY CONTROL OF THE PROVINCE WITH SUCH A SWORD. MY CRUSHING OF THIS REBELLION WILL NOT ONLY BE SYMBOLIC, IT WILL BE ABSOLUTE.
SHOGUNATE MISHIMA. A MAN WHO RULES WITH A CRUEL IRON FIST, WHO IS DEAF TO THE CRIES OF HIS PEOPLE WHO BEND UNDER THE YOKE OF HIS RULE. WORD OF USAGI MIYAMOTO'S CREATION REACHES HIM AND HE IS NOT A HAPPY MAN THAT THE DAIKATANA IS NOT ALREADY IN HIS HANDS.
FATHER, FATHER, LET ME GO WITH YOU!
NOT THIS DAY, MY SON. BUT KNOW YOU THIS, WHEN I RETURN I SHALL PLACE IN YOUR HAND A SWORD THAT WILL CARVE THE DESTINY OF THE MISHIMA CLAN THROUGH A SEA OF BLOOD! EVERY HAND RAISED IN DEFIANCE WILL FALL! EVERY VOICE WILL BE SILENCED!
REMEMBER THESE WORDS, MY SON!
LET US SHOW THIS LITTLE RABBIT WHY HE SHOULD FEAR THE HAND OF MISHIMA! THE HAND THAT WILL WRING HIS SCRAWNY NECK!
USAGI MIYAMOTO CHOSE THE BURNING HEART OF MOUNT FUJIYA AS THE ONLY SAFE PLACE TO HIDE THE DAIKATANA.
THERE IT SHALL BE BEYOND THE REACH OF MANS AVARICE.
ONE OF HIS LAST LIFE LESSONS WOULD BE THAT THE AVARICE OF MAN HAS A LONG REACH.

THE TRUE POWER OF THE DAIKATANA IS MADE APPARENT, SWEEPING DOWN INTO SHOGUNATE MISHIMA'S MEN LIKE A TRANSPARENT WAVE OF DEATH.
TO YOUNG MIYAMOTO, WIELDING THE DAIKATANA WAS LIKE HOLDING SHEET LIGHTNING BY THE TAIL.
MISHIMA AND HIS TROOPS NEVER STOOD A CHANCE.
THE ELEMENTAL FORCE THAT IT WAS, THE DAIKATANA CLOAKED THE MOUNTAINSIDE IN A SHIMMERING HAZE, STAINED PORT WINE RED WITH BLOOD.
...PAPA...
A SIGHT TO TAKE TO THE GRAVE WITH ONE.

YOU HAVE TRADED WITH THE DEVIL TO MAKE SUCH A WEAPON.
PERHAPS I HAVE, BUT NOT KNOWINGLY. THIS DAY I WILL PUT THE DAIKATANA BEYOND THE REACH OF ANY EVIL.
NEVER! IT WILL BELONG TO ME AND MINE!
NOT TODAY, SHOGUN MISHIMA...
SAY HELLO TO YOUR ANCESTORS FROM ME.

SEPPUKU. RITUAL SUICIDE. IN ANCIENT TIMES, AN HONORABLE OPTION.
FAITTHHEEEEEEERRRRRRRR!
UUURGGH... WITH MY DYING BREATH I SHALL PUT THE...DUHHH... DAIKATANA BEYOND THE REACH OF ANY HAND THAT MIGHT USE IT FOR EVIL...
FORGIVE ME, FATHER, I KNEW NOT WHAT I DID...

THE RIVER OF TIME MOVES ONWARD ONCE MORE, SWEEPING ALL BEFORE IT. INNOCENT AND GUILTY ALIKE.
YOU THINK YOU HAVE PUT YOURSELF BEYOND THE REACH OF VENGEANCE? YOU HAVE NOT! DEATH WILL NOT PROTECT YOU FROM ME, THIS I SWEAR...
THE MISHIMA CLAN SHALL RISE AGAIN AND THIS WORLD WILL BE OURS!
ONE DAY THE DAIKATANA WILL TURN THE TIDE OF FATES AND DESTINY AND THE MISHIMA CLAN WILL HAVE ITS DAY!
THIS I SWEAR BY THE BLOOD SHED THIS DAY AND BY THE DAIKATANA ITSELF, OUR DAY WILL COME!

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THE RIVER OF TIME FLOWS EVER ONWARD...
...NEVER REVEALING ITS ULTIMATE PATH.
BUT PERHAPS ONCE IN A LIFETIME...
...IF ONE SEARCHES LONG ENOUGH...
...AND HARD ENOUGH...
...IT CAN REVEAL THE ULTIMATE PRIZE.

TELL TOSHIRO TO PUT THAT CHAMPAGNE ON ICE BECAUSE WE JUST FOUND HIM...
...THE DAIKATANA!!!

LATER...
A LIFETIME DEVOTEE TO THE DAIKATANA, TOSHIRO HAD RECENTLY BEGUN TO GIVE UP HOPE THAT THE LEGENDARY WEAPON WOULD EVER BE FOUND...
...BUT FATE, THAT MYSTERIOUS MISTRESS, HAD OTHER DESIGNS FOR HIM -- AND THE BLADE.
UNFORTUNATELY, HE HAD LONG AGO GROWN TOO OLD TO WIELD IT EFFECTIVELY, SO HE PASSED ON ALL OF HIS EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING IN THE ANCIENT ARTS TO HIS HEIR...
...MIKIKO EBIHARA
HOLD STILL, MIKIKO. I'M NEARLY FINISHED.
FATHER, YOU TRAINED ME TO FIGHT WITH THIS WEAPON, NOT TO BE A LAB ANIMAL!
PATIENCE. WE NEED TO ASCERTAIN WHERE ITS PRIMARY ENERGY WEBS ARE CAPITULATING, FOR OPTIMAL --
JUST LET ME SWING THE DARN THING!
AH. YES. QUITE PERCEPTIVE, MIKIKO. PERHAPS THAT IS THE NECESSARY INGREDIENT TO GIVE THE DAIKATANA LIFE.
EXECUTE YOUR MANEUVERS, CHILD.
COOL...
COOL, INDEED.
HMM... THERE APPEARS TO BE--

I FEEL SOMETHING -- WOW --
IT'S...
...AMAZING...

FOR NEARLY A THOUSAND YEARS, THE DAIKATANA HAD LAIN DORMANT WITHIN ITS VOLCANIC COCOON...
...FORSAKEN BY ITS PREVIOUS WIELDER BECAUSE, ONCE UNLEASHED, ITS UNBRIDLED ENERGY COULD DECIMATE ARMIES.
AND BY UNCOVERING THIS DOOMSDAY WEAPON AFTER YEARS OF TIRELESS SEARCHING, TOSHIRO'S ACTIONS BORE AN UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE TO ANOTHER SCIENTIST'S WORK FROM AN EARLIER DAY.
THAT MAN'S NAME WAS OPPENHEIMER, AND HIS CREATION WAS THE ATOMIC BOMB.

BOTH MEN LABORED FOR THE LOVE OF SCIENCE AND WITH A SENSE OF DESTINY..
...AND BOTH UNLEASHED A WEAPON THAT HAD NO UNDERSTANDING OF GOOD OR EVIL....
THE POWER...
...SO BEAUTIFUL...
CONTROL IT, MIKIKO. FOCUS IT!
LET'S SEE WHAT IT CAN DO!
YES. LET'S JUST SEE WHAT MY DAIKATANA CAN DO...
WHU--?

IT WAS SO GOOD OF YOU TO UNCOVER MY FAMILY'S SWORD AFTER ALL THIS TIME.
AND, AS AN ADDED BONUS, YOU'VE SHOWN ME HOW TO ACTIVATE IT.
HOW CAN I EVER REPAY YOU?
WAIT. I KNOW. AFTER I'VE TAKEN IT FROM YOU AND I'VE USED IT TO INCINERATE YOU AND YOUR DADDY, I'LL DONATE SOME MONEY TO YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY.
YOU -- YOU'LL NEVER TAKE THE DAIKATANA FROM US!
REALLY.
WELL, YOU CAN FORGET THE DONATION.
MEN, KILL THEM, PLEASE.

GIVE IT TO HIM, MIKIKO!
NONE OF IT IS WORTH OUR LIVES!
IT *IS* FATHER! AND IT *WILL NOT* ALLOW ME TO BE DEFEATED BY THE LIKES OF *MISHIMA!*
NERVOUS, YET PROUD, TOSHIRO COULD ONLY MARVEL AT THE SIGHT OF HIS ONLY DAUGHTER AS SHE WIELDED THE DAIKATANA AS IF SHE WAS BORN TO HOLD IT.
HE NEARLY FELT PITY FOR MISHIMA'S MEN AS HE REALIZED HOW NEAR TO OMNIPOTENCE HIS DAUGHTER HAD COME.
WEAPON AND WIELDER -- UNIFIED.

THINKING...
...AND ACTING...
...AS ONE.

EXCELLENT.
YOU ARE ALMOST WORTHY OF THE DAIKATANA.
AND ALMOST I CAN HANDLE...
KLA

MISHIMA NEVER RETURNED TO KILL MIKIKO OR HER FATHER...
...AND SHE DIDN'T INTEND TO GIVE HIM THE CHANCE.
AGAINST HER FATHER'S ARDENT PROTESTATIONS, SHE LEFT TO PURSUE MISHIMA...
...IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT HIM FROM USING THE DAIKATANA FOR HIS OWN MALEVOLENT ENDS.
SHE STILL HAS NOT RETURNED.
THAT IS WHY TOSHIRO HAS TURNED TO ME TO FIND HER.
WHY HE DIDN'T APPROACH ME SOONER IS BEYOND ME...

SINCE I AM THE LAST DESCENDANT OF THE CLAN MIYAMOTO...
...AND IT IS MY DESTINY TO WIELD THE DAIKATANA...
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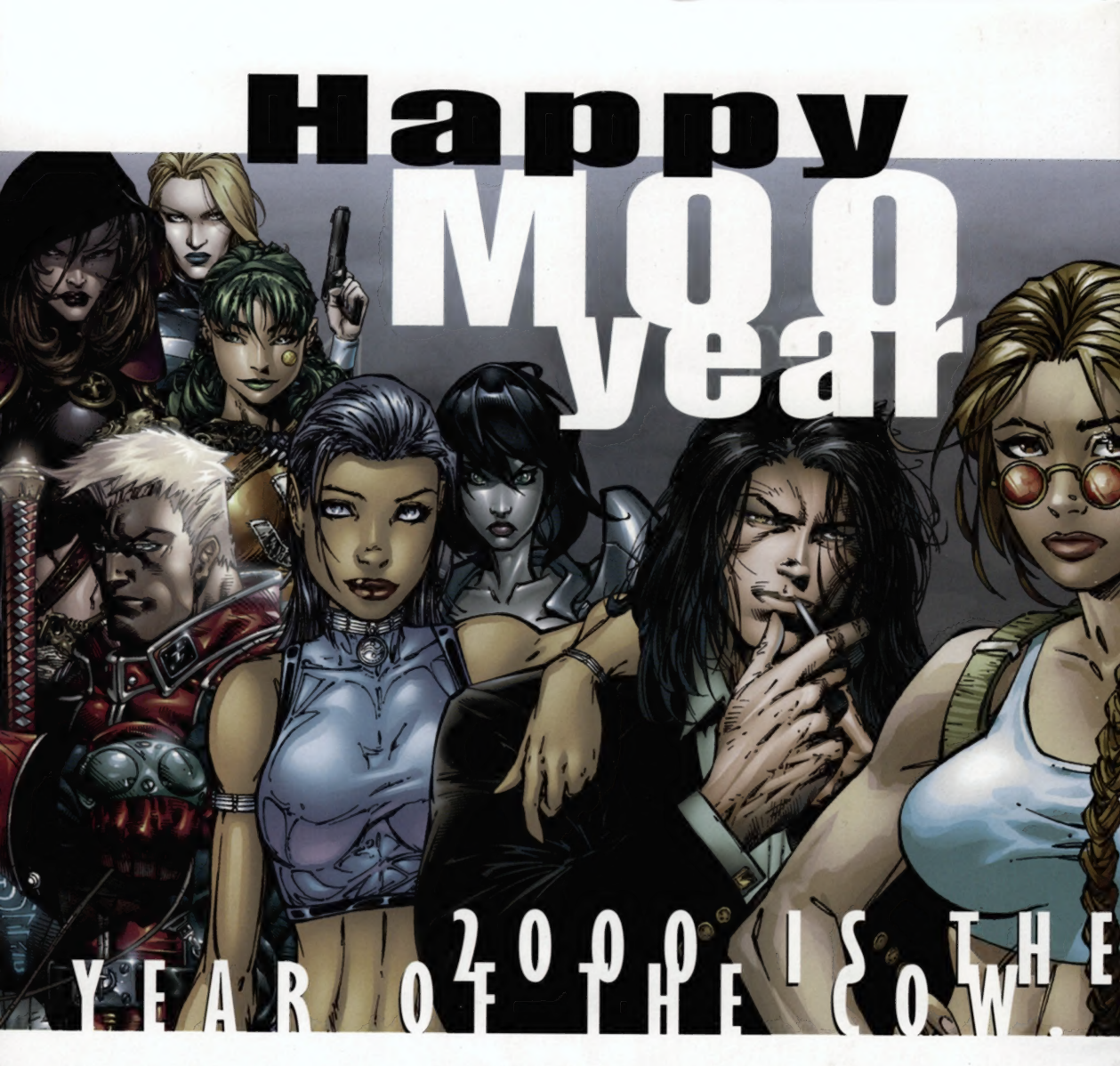

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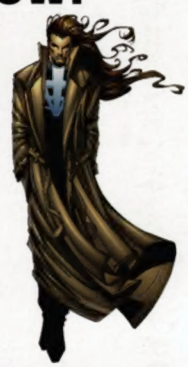

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